

TRANSYLVANIA UNIVERSITY.

JANUARY 4, 1832.

Mr. ALLEN, from the select committee to which the subject had been referred, made the following

REPORT:

The Committee to which was referred the petition of the Trustees of Transylvania University, submit the following report:

The petitioners state that the principal college edifice belonging to said institution was recently destroyed by fire; that, at the same time, her valuable law library, containing about six hundred volumes, together with a considerable portion of her miscellaneous library, and a part of her philosophical apparatus, were consumed. That the edifice destroyed had been erected a few years ago, at an expense of about \$ 30,000; and the other property destroyed is estimated at about \$5,000; and the consequence of this heavy calamity is, that the university is at this time destitute of a building suitable for the purposes of education. Having no means to repair this loss, and feeling in other respects the necessity of aid, she applies for relief to the National Legislature.

The committee have considered the petition, under the conviction, common to themselves and their fellow-citizens of the United States, that the cause of literature and science is closely connected with the permanence of our free institutions, and the elevation of our national character. When these important interests can be aided by the representatives of the people, consistently with other duties, there is, in the opinion of the committee, a manifest propriety that the aid should be afforded; and they are gratified at perceiving, in the past legislation of Congress, a sanction to this opinion.

Among the examples of the views of Congress on this subject, the committee will now barely refer to the act granting additional land, equivalent to a township, to the citizens of the State of Indiana, for the use of schools; and the grant made to the trustees of the Lafayette academy, in Alabama, for the benefit of said academy; and to the act granting a township of land to Connecticut, to aid in instructing the deaf and dumb; and also the grant heretofore made to Kentucky for the same purpose.

The committee cannot imagine a stronger case for a similar grant than that which is presented by the petition of Transylvania university. This institution, after struggling during infancy, like the region in which it is located, with hardship and difficulty, has grown with the growth of the West. Her beneficent agency has been extended in dispensing knowledge throughout

that extensive and interesting country; and it is believed, that, in every State which has been added to the old thirteen members of the confederacy, some of her *alumni* are found occupying a distinguished rank on the bench, in the legislative hall, or in the paths of the learned professions. This honorable evidence of her usefulness, though most striking, is, perhaps, less important than the stock of information which has been carried from her walls to the pursuits of ordinary life, meliorating and enriching the general mind, and fitting the citizens for the discharge of his duties as a man, and for justly estimating his political rights.

If the whole Union is interested in the social advancement of every portion of it, an institution, which has, by great and disinterested efforts, diffused the blessings of education through a large region, deserves the favorable notice of Congress. She comes before it at a moment when her prospects of conferring future advantages on the public are clouded by a dire and unforeseen misfortune, and when the past exertions of the wise, the good, and the liberal, to render her the continuing source of national blessings, are menaced with disappointment. Regarding the petition with the consideration due to past services in the great cause of education, to present calamity, and to the faculty of communicating yet higher benefits to their fellow-citizens, the committee report the accompanying bill.